CII Victor Sergeev May 20, 1990

VS read Izvestia at Hoover, bet. 1 Jan and June '62. Expected growing concern about invasion after April '61. Instead

Jan 10 – "US is preparing invasion."

Jan 19 – big article: "Impossible to destroy freedom of Cuba.

Jan 23 – correspondence on article of Joe Dawson, World
"Castro will be dismissed."

(Punta del Este Jan 24-31: 14 members (2/3 majority) excluded Castro Cuba – though this conflicted with Charter of OAS.

Jan 22

Roswell Gilpatric: Cuba is a threat to the US – We will determine an attitude toward Cuba in definite time. (?)

Every day something on Cuba.

till Feb 20: SU Gov statement, very large

"I have serious reason to conclude the deployment of missiles was discussed in Feb, not April.

"Cuban Gov continued to produce statements that they had no intention to give their territory for the military bases of any states.

(

But then US told: In what part of Cuba is there a Soviet base, and of what kind? An air base, a missile base, or a fleet base? Let them show a request of SU to create a military base in Cuba!

Nobody can do this. Because in Cuba there was no, and there is no, Sov military base. ["Not said – There will be no base."]

there would be an immediate order to press for return, not to attract attention to problem.

But this happened in *February*, not April!

15 April 1989

Gromyko said in *Izvestia* that he had impression that problem had been discussed much earlier with the military.

(May 20, 1962)

When Grom. & K returned from Bulgaria in plane, when no one was near, K wanted to talk with Gromyko. ~~A~~ K had a new thought, and he wanted to share this thought with a man who is expert in foreign policy.

"K thought, situation around Cuba was very dangerous. To rescue Cuba as an independent state, it was necessary to deploy in Cuba a number of our nuclear missiles. Only that can rescue the country. Washington wouldn't stop with the failure at Playa Giron. What do you think about all this?

K waited for an answer. The question was unexpected and ~~it~~ very difficult. I thought, for ~~some~~ minutes and answered. "The operation in the Bay of Pigs was an organized, aggressive action of the US on Cuba. I know the mood in US, where I was for 8 years. I was an Ambassador. I should honestly tell you that the deployment of our missiles in Cuba will produce a *political explosion* in the US. I'm sure of this, and this should be taken into account."

I couldn't tell that my opinion was pleasant for K. [i.e. it was not] I appreciated that hearing such words he might be angry. Nevertheless, this was not the case. But I had a definite feeling that he didn't want to change his position. We were silent,

(conclusions)

"If the US Gov't threatens Cuba, let them produce inferences about states where US bases are situated."

[If... — then [Turkey?] may be threatened also.]

Somebody in the US states policy on the principle of "position of strength (force)": but this is a button with two ends. [!] And if the US would take one end, other states must take the other end of the button and begin to act against forces in the US which want to use this button for the threat against the SU and other peace-loving countries.

[VS: I wonder how this was analyzed in US.

What is this button?
— Aggression vs. Cuba.

or — Deployment of missiles near the SU (Turkey).

Many points here pre-dispose the deployment.

~~[illegible]~~ Uncertainty about the future: emphasis on no SU bases at present, but no mention of future.

(First?) mention of possible missile base in Cuba; there must have been a discussion beforehand about possibility of a missile base. Why did they mention it — not just "military base"!?

[VS: doesn't know; but thinks there must have been discussion about possible US mil. threat to Cuba, [illegible] and how to respond.]

Then, after Feb 20, almost no mention of Cuba! for 3 months. (VS expected big discussion in March + April, then not after April! Once Presidium decides, if Sergo Mikoyan was right, based on what his father told him.

don't need a
and suddenly he said: "We need not (have) a nuclear war, and we have no intention to fight."

strong
He said this [illegible] in a very hard (tougher) voice, and I had a feeling that this formula, as the first [we should deploy missiles] was well-thought.
well-considered

didn't say
I paid attention to the fact that he ~~said~~ this immediately after the first. And when I had heard this, I had a better feeling. Even the voice of K, it seemed to me, became softer. I was silent.
I didn't want to add something to what I had said.
anything

(Grom. was not then a member of Politburo; Central Committee?
For. Min.)

K said, "I will discuss this question very soon in the meeting of the Presidium of the CC."

What is important is that K expressed his opinion, to me and then in Presidium, without any doubts. I had the impression that with the military this question was arranged earlier.

I had a feeling that Malinovsky had supported K's suggestion without any objections.

[VS: Why no discussion about possible reaction by US Government? VS thinks: Sov officials didn't consider the US reaction, none of them. K's knowledge of US was very restricted; thinks K accepted picture of US in SU press: USG was puppet in hands of MIC + RC.
He didn't understand ~~[illegible]~~ or consider role of Congress and public opinion. "He just thought [metaphor] 'it's like

military bases (missiles) in Europe: we can't do anything in Europe; and when we put bases (missiles!) in Cuba, they won't be able to do anything.

[Why keep secret?]

VS: "general style of Sov diplomacy, to produce a surprise: Sputnik, Gagarin ...
for dramatic effect, to organize a show
VS: does not think K worried about a blockade: though military might have worried.

VS: I think K had thought about the possibility that he might remove the missiles.
(answer to Gromyko)

VS: don't think K could conceive of JFK reacting except ~~for~~ first by secret diplomacy.

Alexeev in Argumenty i Fakty (
When the idea to deploy missiles emerged?

(Feb?)
In the beginning of the spring, the Cuban + Sov gov came to the conclusion to take some measures to prevent an American invasion.

... In the beginning of May I was asked to go to Moscow as Ambassador [bet. 5-8 May]

Mikoyan, Rashidov (3 members of Polit. 1, deputies)
In one conversation (Kozlov, ... Malinovsky, Biryuzov
I heard for first time about intention to deploy missiles. K asked me about Fidel attitude to this decision, I can tell you that after this question I became as a stone. [without movement ...] I answered that it's difficult to imagine that

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But neither considered that an action short of violence, a NV action, might still evoke a violent response, and/or a dangerous, aggressive, threatening, provocative military response.

(for JFK: threats to Cuba; even, attack on Cuba (not bases in Turkey)

VS " Sov leaders didn't consider that US leaders didn't consider Cuba as an independent state

VS: like SU and Czech in 1968!

SU would have accepted US invasion of Cuba in 1961

Sovs saw a different situation in 1962, when Cuba was "a socialist country"

Suppose there had been multi-party election in spring 1969 ~~1968~~ in Czech, in which Coms lost.

Would Brezhnev have accepted that this changed the situation?

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Fidel would agree; because he built all his strategy on the defense of the revolution on strengthening the solidarity with world public opinion and LA public opinion on Cuba; and a Sov missile deployment would definitely destroy this support.

[no longer seen as an independent TW country.

K thought, to prevent an American invasion of Cuba, a means of deterrence is needed... something that would restrict US plans and would bring Cuba into the center of world politics.

[US: supports US point of view; world opinion, not only strat. balance or deterrence

[Would Sov troops alone have stopped JFK? McN?
(JCS: no).

"US should be convinced that in the case of attack or ~~invasion~~ they would have to deal not only with Cuba but with the total power of the SU, and this means of deterrence could be only nuclear weapons.

[as NATO finds! US agrees, "Maybe I was wrong—
SU troops would not be enough).

From Feb to June, 2 statements of K

2) Before elections in SU, K's electoral speech (March 17) extremely interesting about general sit. in world, only one line ~~word~~ about Cuba (strange, considering 2 months of discussion earlier, Jan–Feb)

"We would support Cuba, by different means."

Whereas six ~~pairs of text~~ paragraphs about the new global missiles (to get around US ABM — can come from any direction). [So he did have "strat. balance"— technical superiority of SU [?] — "not just ability to retal.," "to shock public opinion